

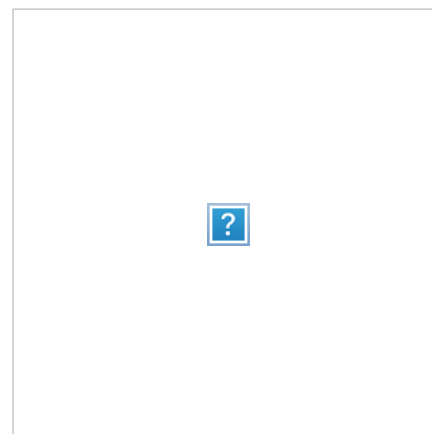
2003 Registry Award Winners

Posted on 1/1/2004

We would like to thank all of the participants in the Registry and congratulate everyone on their individual accomplishments in each and every set. The number of outstanding collections in the NGC Registry is truly astonishing and we are thrilled to honor such great achievement.

Congratulations to our 2003 Registry Award Winners!

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The mission was to choose five sets in three categories: Best Classic, Best Modern and Best Presented. Choosing just five sets in each category proved to be quite a challenge. Our team of experts—Rick Montgomery, Mark Salzberg and David Lange—reviewed all of the top sets across every category in the Registry and after much consideration, selected the following sets.

Congratulations to our winners!

Sets are listed in alphabetical order by set name.



Best Classic Sets

Bob Moreno's Buffalo Nickels 1913-1938 - Bob Moreno

We love Buffalo Nickels, but then who doesn't? Mr. Moreno has assembled a simply amazing set of this perennially popular series. Most of his coins grade MS-66 or higher, with his 1937 and 1938-D/S nickels grading no less than MS-68! The former is also an NGC star-designated coin, which just hints at how pretty it is.

Among the standout rarities are 1915-S, 1918-S and 1925-S, all in MS-65, and an MS-66 graded 1921-S. His 1918 nickel in MS-67 is a fabulous condition rarity.

Mr. Moreno's set also features the popular varieties within the Buffalo series. His 1914/3 grades a respectable MS-62, while his very rare 1916 Doubled-Die obverse nickel is an impressive VF-20. The rare and extremely popular 1918/7-D is represented by a near-gem MS-64 example, while his three-legger is a whopping MS-66 beauty.

Everest Collection of Proof Morgan Dollars - First Strike Society

Arguably the most popular United States coin, the Morgan Silver Dollar is a mainstay of the coin hobby. But few collectors dare to undertake the formation of a complete proof run from 1878 through 1921. The Everest Collection is amazingly complete, including two subtypes of the 1878 proof and both varieties of the ultra rare 1921 proofs.

Just two coins in this set grade less than PF-67, and this is indicative of its overall superb quality. Highlights include the 1896, 1898 and 1900 proof dollars, all of which were graded PF-68 Ultra Cameo! Other coins bearing the NGC star for superior eye appeal include 1879 (PF-68 Cameo), the rare 1895 (PF-67 Ultra Cameo) and 1902 (PF-68). The Everest Collection features an ultra rare 1921 Chapman proof grading PF-67 and also a Zerbe proof grading PF-66. These are coins rarely seen at shows and auctions, and they are major highlights of this memorable collection.

The Gregg Bingham Silver Commemorative Type Set - Gregg Bingham

It should come as no surprise that Mr. Bingham's set of commems joins this illustrious group of classic sets. There's been plenty of buzz about it in our message forums over the past year, and it is indeed an amazing collection. In addition to condition rarities aplenty, it includes the very rare brilliant proof 1892 Columbian Exposition Half Dollar. While this coin is a non-competitive entry, it certainly adds spice to see Gregg's fabulous PF-68 Cameo specimen.

Some of the many highlights from this collection include several grading MS-68: Bay Bridge, 1936-D Columbia, Elgin, Iowa, Lynchburg, New Rochelle, 1937-D Oregon Trail, Roanoke, Stone Mountain and Wisconsin. Another MS-68 entry that is common in lesser grades but exceedingly rare at this level is Mr. Bingham's 1946-S B.T. Washington Half Dollar. Among the rarer issues are a 1925 Vancouver in MS-67 and a gorgeous Lafayette Dollar grading MS-67.

The Hugon Collection Proof Barber Quarters - John Hugon

Hugon is a name that's become synonymous with the very finest quality in proof Barber silver coins. While John Hugon's sets of proof Barber Dimes and Halves are equally impressive, it's his set of quarters that really stood out in 2003. No less than six of his quarters grade PF-69, and four of these also carry the NGC star designation for superior eye appeal. As so many of these coins are richly toned, there are just a few that have been certified as Cameo, but it's nice to see such originality in these vintage proofs.

Lisa's Proof Gold Type Set 1834-1915 - Dr. Robert Loewinger

Dr. Loewinger has assembled a magnificent proof gold type set. All of his coins are in high grades for their respective types, and all of the brilliant proofs are either Cameo or Ultra Cameo. Favorites of ours include his three-dollar piece, which not only grades PF-67 Cameo but also carries the NGC star designation for superior eye appeal. Another star holder is his matte proof Indian Head Half Eagle. His Type 2 gold dollar in PF-66 Ultra Cameo is an extremely rare coin in any grade, but this specimen is a visual delight.

You can see a number of these coins in Dr. Loewinger's terrific new book titled *Proof Gold Coinage of the United States*. NGC was pleased to provide many of the photos for this reference, which has already become a must-have item for the numismatist.



Best Modern Sets

C. Soto Jefferson Collection 1950-date Proofs - C Soto

Complete from 1950 to date, this terrific set of proof Jeffersons is rich in condition rarities. The rare debut entry from 1950 is a winner at PF-67 Cameo, while his 1951 grades PF-68 Cameo. The next two dates in succession grade no less than PF-69 Cameo, while Soto's 1954 nickel is an amazing PF-68 Ultra Cameo. Other really tough condition rarities include the 1966 and 1967 SMS nickels in PF-66 Ultra Cameo!

An excellent level of consistency has been achieved with the remaining dates from 1968 through 2003. These are about evenly divided between PF-69 UC and PF-70 UC coins. The scarce Type 2 varieties of 1979-S and 1981-S are both of the higher grade. Finally, both specimen strikings are represented in this collection with nice SP-69 examples.

Eric Pacheco Cameo Cent Collection Lincoln 1950-date Proofs - Eric

Pacheco

Lincoln Cent proofs from 1950 to date include more than fifty coins, and many of these are surprisingly rare in the higher grades. Mr. Pacheco has overcome this obstacle to assemble an absolutely wonderful set of this long and very popular series. Nearly all are certified as Ultra Cameo, with the vast majority grading PF-67 and higher.

Memorable specimens include the first-year-of-issue 1950 grading PF-66 RD Ultra Cameo. An important condition rarity is his 1954 at PF-67 RD Ultra Cameo. 1957 is known as a tough date to find with strong contrast, and Mr. Pacheco's grades an astounding PF-68 RD Ultra Cameo. All three SMS coins are high-grade Cameo pieces, and these dates are almost unknown in Ultra. The final thirty years of proofs are nearly all PF-69 RD Ultra Cameo, with a few grading PF-70 RD Ultra Cameo.

Everest Collection of Proof Franklin Halves - First Strike Society

While it is a relatively short series, the Franklin Half Dollar proofs of 1950-63 include some very scarce coins for the condition conscious collector. The Everest Collection clearly was prepared with this thought in mind, as the average grade for this set is remarkably high, with a consistent level of quality.

The collection kicks off with a delightful 1950 half dollar grading PF-65 Ultra Cameo. Finding this level of frosting on a 1950 is nearly impossible, yet this specimen also received the NGC star designation for superior eye appeal. Other dates earning the NGC star include 1955 and 1958, both grading an impressive PF-68 Ultra Cameo. No less than four of the Everest Collection's proof Franklins grade a whopping PF-69 Ultra Cameo, as fine as these coins come. Dates that merited this lofty grade include 1956, 1960, 1962 and 1963.

The Houston Collection of Washington Quarters - Robert Fulton

No series has been more in the news during the past five years than the Washington Quarter. The 50-States quarters program has brought the original series a level of attention it never knew before. Perhaps the Houston Collection of 1932-64 quarters should be called the MS-67 Collection, as that is the predominate grade in this superb assemblage. Among the really scarce coins carrying that high grade are 1935-D, 1936-D, 1937-S and 1939-S. The low-mintage 1932-D and 1932-S issues are each graded MS-65, the former being especially rare and highly sought at this level.

Other highlights of this fine collection include 1934-D, MS-66; 1944-D, MS-67 and 1951-S, MS-68. Among the later issues, two real condition rarities include 1960-D

and 1962-D, each grading MS-67. The very scarce 1950-D/S and 1950-S/D quarters are represented by amazing examples grading MS-65 and MS-66, respectively.

The Renard Collection of Modern Commems 1982-Date, Complete - Rick Renard

Complete for all types, denominations, dates and mint, and including both uncirculated and proof coins, the Renard Collection is overwhelming in the number of coins it contains. Aside from its completeness, however, it is remarkable for the amazingly high grade average maintained throughout. While only a few of the modern commems are scarce in overall numbers, selecting just the right example that will earn a top grade remains very challenging, and this collection is dominated by pieces grading 69 and 70, the proofs all being Ultra Cameo.

A standout condition rarity is the 1982-D Washington Half Dollar. Notorious as the rarest of the modern commems in high grades, the Renard specimen is certified at an amazing MS-69! Another early issue carrying a very high grade is the 1984-W Olympics Eagle, checking in at MS-70. The 1995-96 Olympics issues, notable for their low mintages, nearly all grade MS-70 or PF-70 Ultra Cameo. Also grading MS-70 is the very scarce, low-mintage Jackie Robinson Half Eagle from 1997.



Best Presented Sets

Barry's Peace Gems – The Lovvorn Collection

Providing a dash of history, technical specifications and photos for every coin in the set, The Lovvorn Collection of Peace Silver Dollars is a fine example of a well presented set.

Cardinal Collection (Early Silver Dollars 1794-1804 Variety set) – Cardinal

Offering wonderful photos and informative, detailed descriptions of each required coin in the set, the Cardinal Collection of Early Silver Dollars is complete in every way!

Hoot's Classic Jeffs '38-'64 – Hoot

There is one word that best describes the presentation of this Jefferson Nickel set – personality. With coin descriptions of a conversational style accompanied by solid photographs, one really gets a sense for this collector's passion for building sets. It is a wonderful example of what makes the Registry special.

The Jewell Collection – Three Dollar Gold Coins – RCJ Wexford Collection

This set boasts lovely photographs of each coin within the set that are sure to inspire the collector in each of us.

Sunnywood Cherrypicker Variety Shield 5c Set – Sunnywood

The presentation of this set is defined by the first rate coin descriptions that make for interesting reading whether you are a collector of this series or not. In addition, the photographs exhibit the varieties in close-up detail, making this an impressive set with an educational punch.

Winners in these three categories will receive a personalized plaque, an icon of recognition by his/her set listing in the registry and up to five Deluxe Photoproofs of NGC coins from his/her winning set.

Please [click here to see the details of these fantastic sets](#) and also to see our list of #1 sets in every Registry category.

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FUN Luncheon

Posted on 1/1/2004

Thank you to everyone who attended our Registry and Message Board Luncheon at the FUN show. We had a great turnout and were so pleased to finally meet everyone in person.

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Thank you also to Todd and Robert Abbey of Cameo CC who generously offered a prize in a drawing for all luncheon attendees. Richard Jewell is the lucky winner and will receive an 8 oz. Silver Coaster from Cameo CC.

We look forward to seeing you all again real soon!

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NGC Grading On-site at Long Beach

Posted on 1/1/2004

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- **\$100 Same Day Special:**
\$100 per coin for all coins over \$1500 in value
- **\$55 Same Day Special:**
\$55 per coin for all coins valued at \$1500 or less
- **\$35 Same Day Gold Show Special:**
\$35 per coin for all Gold coins valued at \$1000 or less; five coin minimum

On Tuesday, January 27th, submissions for \$100, \$55 and Gold Same Day services will be accepted from 2:00 to 7:00 pm at the Hyatt for Lot 1 to be processed Wednesday, January 28th. *Please contact Customer Service for specific location.* Wednesday, January 28th, submissions will be accepted prior to setup from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm at the Hyatt. In addition, submissions for Same Day services will be accepted during regular show hours on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, January 28-30. Coins for \$100 and \$55 Same Day service submitted prior to daily cutoff times will be returned before the close of the show each day. Coins for the Gold service will be returned no later than the close of the show on Friday, January 30th. Please check with NGC show representatives for

daily cutoff times.

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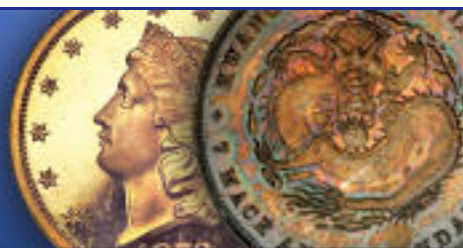
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United States



NGC News

Silver Dollar Varieties Growing in Popularity

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Silver Dollar Varieties Growing in Popularity

Posted on 1/1/2004

While there are several United States coin series that can claim to be the most popular with American collectors, I believe the consistent front runner in recent decades has been, and will continue to be, Morgan silver dollars.

David Lange



While there are several United States coin series that can claim to be the most popular with American collectors, I believe the consistent front runner in recent decades has been, and will continue to be, Morgan silver dollars. Most collectors of this series are satisfied with the completion of a set by date and mint. The several key dates in the Morgan series, while not truly rare in

overall numbers, present quite a challenge to one's budget. In the course of assembling their sets, however, many collectors will be intrigued by the numerous varieties in this series. Some are well known and are considered by many collectors to be a regular part of a complete set. These include the 8-tailfeather, 7-tailfeather and 7/8-tailfeather varieties of 1878, the several overdates of 1880 and 1887, the O/S varieties of 1882, the O/CC varieties of 1900 and the very obvious doubled-die varieties of 1888-O ("Hot Lips") and 1901 (doubled tailfeathers). These mainstream varieties are found in most catalogs, and their values are published in several price guides.

With such high mintages for this series, enough dies were created that there are literally thousands of minor varieties for the Morgan dollar. An extensive documentation of these is found in the landmark book *Comprehensive Catalog and Encyclopedia of Morgan & Peace Dollars*, by Leroy C. Van Allen and the late A. George Mallis. Now in its fourth edition, this book is also a well researched history of the Morgan and Peace dollar coinage and includes very useful technical information. Varieties in these series are identified by VAM numbers, this acronym being taken from the surnames of the two authors, **V**an **A**llen **M**allis.

While the VAM book has been in print for about thirty years, the real popularity of collecting these varieties began less than ten years ago. Most VAM varieties, while technically interesting, do not carry any premium, and collectors were somewhat bewildered by so many choices. It was only with the recent publication of several books isolating the more desirable varieties that this facet of collecting achieved widespread interest.

The first of these specialized works is *The Top 100 Morgan Dollar Varieties: The VAM Keys*, by Dr. Michael S. Fey and Jeff Oxman. This pocket-sized guide was published in 1996, and it identifies and illustrates the 100 most desired VAM varieties within the Morgan series. The success of this book led to additional interest in VAM varieties, so co-author Jeff Oxman wrote a follow-up book in 2000 that was published by the Society of Silver Dollar Collectors. The *SSDC Official Guide to the Hot 50 Morgan Dollar Varieties* illustrates an additional 50 varieties that have come to prominence with the overall increase in VAM collecting. Though in a larger format than its predecessor, this book is light enough that it may be carried to coin shows.

I find the most interesting Morgan dollars to be the first issues struck by the Philadelphia Mint at the onset of coinage in 1878. These are the three dozen or so varieties coined from dies that were made from the original 8-tailfeather reverse hub. Many collectors specialize in this area, and attribution of these varieties was made much simpler with a book by Jeff Oxman and Les Hartnett titled *The 1878 Morgan Dollar 8-TF Attribution System*. Another SSDC publication from 1998, this book is similar in format to the Hot 50 guide and is just as easily used.

Also popular with collectors are the varieties in which the second reverse hub of 1878, having seven tailfeathers, was impressed into dies that had already been hubbed with the 8-tailfeather reverse. These so-called 7/8-TF varieties show anywhere from zero to seven of the underlying feathers, but they're still identifiable by other doubled elements on their reverses. Oxman and Hartnett teamed up once again to write *The 1878 Morgan Dollar 7/8-TF Attribution Guide* in 1999. It, too, was published by the SSDC, and all three such books feature the excellent photography of Bill Fivaz.

The final specialized niche in Morgan dollar VAM collecting are the several 1879-S varieties having the parallel arrowfeather Reverse of 1878. David T. Wang produced a very useful guide to attributing these varieties utilizing a format similar to the Oxman/Hartnett books. His well illustrated *A Guide to the 1879-S Reverse of 1878 Morgan Silver Dollars*, published in 2001, did for these varieties what the other specialized VAM books have done by making them easy to identify.

While not as popular as Morgan dollars, the Peace dollar series has its own favored varieties. Peace dollar dies often show extreme erosion, so variety attribution can be challenging. The SSDC once again was publisher of another Jeff Oxman book, this time co-authored with Dr. David Close. *The Official Guide to the Top 50 Peace Dollar Varieties* came out just last year. Using the same large format, this easy-to-carry book may finally popularize the collecting of Peace dollar varieties.

As the attributer of varieties for my employer, Numismatic Guaranty Corporation, I can attest to the usefulness of these various books. A new day has dawned for VAMers, who once felt very alone.

David W. Lange's column USA Coin Album appears monthly in Numismatist, the official publication of the American Numismatic Association.

Are you a Morgan Dollar Collector? Check out the NGC Coin Price Guide's [Morgan Dollar coin prices](#).

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Top Numismatic Companies to Conserve and Grade SS Republic Coins

Posted on 1/1/2004

Tens of thousands of gold and silver United States coins are being recovered from the shipwreck of the SS Republic in what could prove to be the most valuable coin collection ever to come to market.

Odyssey Awards Exclusive Contract to NGC and NCS

Tens of thousands of gold and silver United States coins are being recovered from the shipwreck of the SS Republic in what could prove to be the most valuable coin collection ever to come to market. Archaeological excavation of the Republic is currently being conducted by Odyssey Marine Exploration of Tampa, Florida. Numismatic Conservation Services (NCS) and Numismatic Guaranty Corporation (NGC) have been awarded an exclusive contract to perform conservation, grading and encapsulation of these coins for the numismatic market.

The SS Republic was a sidewheel steamship that foundered in a hurricane while enroute from New York to New Orleans in 1865. Reportedly carrying \$400,000 in gold specie when she sank off the coast of Georgia to a depth of 1700 feet, Republic is being carefully excavated under the direction of Odyssey's project archaeologist, Neil Cunningham Dobson. The coins are receiving exceptionally gentle treatment, each piece being lifted from the sea bed with a specially designed, soft silicone limpet to preserve their delicate surfaces.

Among the coins already retrieved are [numerous gold eagles, gold double eagles and silver half dollars](#), nearly all dating between the early 1850s and 1865. Unlike other recently salvaged shipwrecks, a wide variety of dates and mints have been noted in this find. Based on the pieces recovered thus far that have been professionally conserved by Numismatic Conservation Services (NCS) and graded and encapsulated by Numismatic Guaranty Corporation (NGC), this

collection may already include several finest-known examples of United States gold and silver coins from the period.

"NGC and NCS are extremely pleased and proud to have been chosen as the exclusive conservation and grading service by Odyssey Marine Exploration," stated NGC Chairman and CEO Mark Salzberg. "This find is a numismatic treasure of extreme historical importance. The SS Republic was bringing assistance and commerce to the war-torn South immediately following the Civil War. The cache of coins being retrieved from this site is already revealing classic rarities as well as condition-census items. As the official conservation and grading services of the American Numismatic Association, we look forward to providing the finest services available not only to Odyssey Marine Exploration but to all collectors who will enjoy these treasures for generations to come."

NCS has already conserved a number of the coins from SS Republic, and these have initially revealed a mix of dates and conditions. "This is truly a remarkable find. This collection of coins, after conservation, will offer something for everyone," says David Camire, NCS Vice President. "So far our conservation has revealed a mix of dates for both \$10 and \$20 gold pieces and Seated Halves. The variety and condition of the coins is astounding. We have already discovered what we believe to be a previously unknown misplaced date variety."

It's estimated that it may take several months to complete the recovery of SS Republic's numismatic treasure, with both NCS and NGC devoting their combined resources to the conservation and certification of these coins. From the beginning of the recovery expedition, National Geographic Television & Film has been documenting Odyssey's archaeological excavation of the SS Republic in association with JWM Productions, LLC. This footage is being prepared for broadcast on a special "Dateline NBC" and for "National Geographic Ultimate Explorer" on MSNBC in 2004, with additional coverage later in 2004 in a National Geographic Special on PBS.

Odyssey Marine Exploration, Inc. (Amex: OMR) is a public company founded by deep-ocean shipwreck pioneers John Morris and Greg Stemm. The company specializes in shipwreck search, recovery and marketing on a worldwide basis, combining cutting-edge technology with extensive research and sound archaeological practices.

"After careful deliberation and due diligence, we are pleased to have chosen Numismatic Conservation Services (NCS) and Numismatic Guaranty Corporation (NGC) as the exclusive conservation and grading services for this historic event,"

said John Morris, Odyssey co-founder and CEO. "The fact that these companies are the official services of the American Numismatic Association, coupled with their complete, hands-off, independent standing within the numismatic community, made this choice an easy one. We look forward to presenting these historic coins to the numismatic world in NGC and NCS holders."

Odyssey's decision was based both on the status of NCS and NGC as the ANA's official conservation and grading services and the two companies' unique ability to handle the Republic coins from raw material to finished product. Only NCS and NGC have the skilled professionals already on staff to determine proper conservation techniques for revealing the beauty of these coins and stabilizing their surfaces for long-term preservation, as well as to establish their correct condition grade for ultimate placement with collectors. NCS and NGC combined are a complete numismatic service organization: NCS is the only professional conservation service specializing in coins and other numismatic items, while NGC is the largest independent coin grading service in the world, having certified more than ten million collectible coins.

More detailed information about the discovery and salvage of SS Republic, as well as a number of photographs, may be found at Odyssey Marine Exploration's web site, www.shipwreck.net.

As the project develops, NCS will highlight some of the coins with before and after photographs on its own web site, www.NCSCoin.com.

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